DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 210 870 EC 140 672

AUTHOR Lederer, James B.; And Others
TITLE Evaluation of the Program for Multiply Handicapped in the Bergen County Special Services School District.
INSTITUTION Bergen County Special Services School District, Paramus, N.J.
PUB DATE 19 May 81
NOTE 28p.

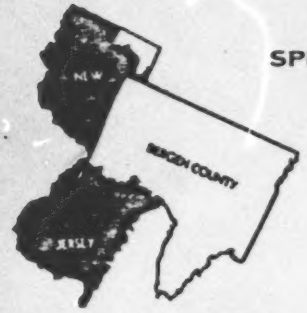
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Delivery Systems; Early Childhood Education; Elementary Secondary Education; *Multiple Disabilities; *Program Descriptions; *Program Evaluation; Skill Development; *Therapy
IDENTIFIERS New Jersey (Bergen County)

ABSTRACT

The report describes evaluation of the Bergen County (NJ) program designed to develop positive self concept, foster appropriate communication skills, maximize physical growth and ability, and provide direction and counsel in making appropriate decisions for postschool life of approximately 135 multiply handicapped children (3 to 20 years old). Individual sections address the following program components: program philosophy; program goals; program objectives; instructional and service activities; instructional materials; instructional and therapeutic equipment; instructional resources; related services; monitoring the progress of instruction and therapy; organizational development (grouping of students, staffing, job descriptions, staff development); decision making; and outreach (community services, community education, parent education). Noted among commendations and recommendations are that materials and equipment are used appropriately in classes and in therapy rooms, the program appears to have a comprehensive system for collecting and reporting critical student data and daily information, and attention should be given to the need to incorporate prevocational and vocational training into the curriculum. A table with administrative response to evaluation recommendations and an appended program description complete the report. (SE)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED210870



BOARD OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL SERVICES SCHOOL DISTRICT OF BERGEN COUNTY
327 EAST RIDGEWOOD AVE.
PARAMUS, N. J. 07652

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

EVALUATION OF THE PROGRAM FOR MULTIPLY HANDICAPPED

in the

BERGEN COUNTY SPECIAL SERVICES SCHOOL DISTRICT

Dr. Russell G. Layden, Superintendent
Dr. James B. Lederer, Assistant Superintendent

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Russell G. Layden
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

Evaluation Consultants:
Dr. Michael Bender
Dr. Jeannette Fleischner

May 19, 1981

EC140672

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements.....page 1

Preface.....page 2

Narrative.....page 3

- Program Philosophy.....page 3
- Program Goals.....page 3
- Program Objectives.....page 3
- Instructional and Services Activities.....page 4
- Instructional Materials.....page 5
- Instructional and Therapeutic Equipment.....page 6
- Instructional Resources.....page 6
- Related Services.....page 6
- Monitoring the Progress of Instruction and Therapy.....page 7
- Organizational Development.....page 8
- Decision-Making.....page 10
- Outreach.....page 11

Summary Evaluative Statements and Recommendations.....page 12

Administrative Response to Evaluation Recommendations.....page 15

Appendix I: Program Description.....page 16

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This is to acknowledge the numerous contributions made by Mr. Leon Butchko, Program Director, Miss Voula Chelico, Child Study Team Chairperson, Mrs. Marge Valenta, P.T.O. President, and to the entire staff and parent gorup who were ever so helpful in the development of the evaluation. The Board of Trustees is also to be thanked for their support of this evaluation effort.

PREFACE

The Bergen County Special Services School District, a County-wide Regional School District servicing students from Bergen, Passaic, and northern-Hudson Counties in northern New Jersey has operated a program for orthopedically handicapped youngsters for 8 years. The Multiply Handicapped Program serves 135 moderately to severely multiply handicapped children from 3 to 20 years of age. The children enrolled in the program range in physical abilities from those capable of independent ambulation and of independence in self-help skills to those who are and who will be wheelchair bound and totally dependent on others for assistance with all functions. Cognitively, the children range from those with average or better than average intellectual ability to those who are moderately retarded. A similar range exists in communicative facility: some children use speech to express wants, needs and ideas, whereas others are learning to use non vocal communication devices. A detailed listing of the philosophy, goals, objectives, and Program description may be found in Appendix I.

The District has utilized a combination of a self-study and third party evaluation to take a broad and deep look at the extent to which the Program goals are being met. This Report reflects the results of the self-study and third party evaluation.

THE PROGRAM FOR THE MULTIPLY HANDICAPPED

I. PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

The stated philosophy of the Program for the Multiply Handicapped gives direction to its admissions and educational procedures. Inherent in the statement is the concept that all individuals are worthy regardless of their physical and/or mental limitations. Recognition of the value of any individual further underlies the purposes and goals of the program: to provide educational and therapeutic services which will enable each child to maximize his or her potential. This philosophy is consistent with the highest ideals of our society, and the Board of the Special Services School District is to be commended for its pioneering efforts to bring public educational services to this frequently neglected population. The very existence of the Program demonstrates that the philosophy underlying it is correct and represents an attainable goal.

II. PROGRAM GOALS

The goals of the Multiply Handicapped Program are consistent with its stated philosophy. Its stated purpose is "...to develop an in-depth educational program for approximately 135 multiply handicapped children." The objectives and goals of the curriculum are to:

1. Develop a positive self-concept and to lead to independence in post-school adjustment.
2. Foster appropriate communication skills on cognitive and affective levels.
3. Help each student to maximize physical growth and ability.
4. Direct and counsel each student and his/her parent in making appropriate decisions for post-school life.

III. PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

At present, program objectives are globally stated, and often are left to the discretion of teachers and therapist. However, two curriculum committees are working diligently to produce curricula in self-help, and in basic advanced skills areas. The staff of the program has initiated this effort to formalize the curriculum; in an effort to facilitate the development of what promises to be a fine curriculum, this evaluation will focus on the proposed objectives.

A. Allowing for Continuous Progress

The proposed curriculum fits a continuous progress model, beginning with basic sensory and motor activities, and continuing through the integration of these behaviors, the development of primitive cognitive and communicative behavior, the acquisition of complex skills, and on to a full range of academic, self-help, social, and pre-vocational skills.

B. Individual, Group and Differential Instruction

Curriculum objectives are stated in behavioral terms, and thus, lend themselves to easy translation into instructional plans. Since this is a continuous progress curriculum, individualization of instruction within classroom groups will be easy to achieve. With older, and more able class groups, the curriculum should facilitate homogeneous grouping for academic instruction. In fact, there is clear evidence that the present structure of the program already permits this grouping. For instance, it was a pleasure to observe the extent to which teachers effectively taught groups of children, while still maintaining careful monitoring of individual children's understanding of the concepts and the information which were taught, and in so doing, adhered to the objectives set forth in the IEPs.

C. Comprehensive Nature of the Curriculum

The proposed curriculum is comprehensive and accounts for the developmental instructional needs of multiply handicapped children and youth who range in cognitive ability from moderate levels of retardation through average intellectual ability. The staff reports that severely and profoundly retarded children presently are served by Day Training programs. If this remains the case, the proposed curriculum will account for development in motor, sensory-motor, language (including oral and alternative communication systems), social, affective, self-help, academic, and pre-vocational areas.

Absent from the proposed curriculum is vocational training. Given the paucity of vocational opportunities for multiply handicapped adults in Bergen County, one can hardly fault the schools for failing to train children and youth for nonexistent employment opportunities. However, should employment opportunities increase, a revision of the curriculum would be necessary.

A similar point may be made regarding functional living skills: the proposed curriculum appears to focus on those skills which can be attained by the most physically independent, and does not focus on the management of an environment by those who will never be physically able to contribute to the upkeep of a home. As an example, the curriculum committee should consider adding to the proposed curriculum those objectives which speak to becoming an informed consumer of services--what to do to gain homemaker services; how to "supervise" home-makers, how to request changes from a case-manager; how to use S.S.I. funds; how to determine Medicaid eligibility, etc.

There are specific objectives in the proposed curriculum which relate to the socio-emotional/behavioral area. It is clear from the observations that were made that all staff members are concerned about the emotional well-being of the children in the program. In many ways, therefore, the stated objectives will serve to formalize the existing realities of the program. It is judged that the present curriculum development efforts

are appropriate and that the resultant curriculum is likely to enhance an already fine program.

IV. INSTRUCTIONAL AND SERVICE ACTIVITIES

The Multiply Handicapped Program provides instruction and educationally related therapeutic services to children ranging in age from 3 to 20. In the 16 classes, instructional planning seemed to be closely related to the proposed curriculum, covering a broad gamut of skills, from self-help skills to complex academic material.

The teachers obviously were well prepared, and the over-all impression of the quality of instruction was that it was excellent. Review of student records revealed meticulously kept medical and therapy records and excellent examples of IEPs. Overall, the caliber of service is judged to be excellent, and in all cases reviewed, the services provided are those clearly specified on IEPs.

A good deal of careful planning obviously goes into the socialization activities within the school. A shortcoming of the community is the dearth of recreational opportunities available to the students of the Multiply Handicapped Program. Conversations with parents reinforced the notion that the range of activities available varies from community to community, and, that there are fewer opportunities for older, and for more severely physically handicapped students. This comment is made with the full realization that provision of recreational and social activities is not the responsibility of the school district. However, the absence of these opportunities does make it necessary for the school program to provide more social programming that it might otherwise. As the Program moves to its new building, perhaps its administrative staff and the Board of Education might initiate an aggressive OUTREACH program to community agencies, which might result in, at least, centralized recreational activities for this population.

V. INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

The amount of instructional materials available to the school appear to be quite sufficient. The appropriateness of the materials must be judged with the proposed curriculum in mind. As this curriculum is implemented, review of materials may reveal the need for more diversity. The curriculum materials in the school tend to reflect a very academic theme, which, while appropriate for some, may not be appropriate for others. However, there are also many materials available and in use which support instruction in ADL and related self-help skills. As the teaching of pre-vocational and vocational skills is increased, materials to support this instruction may be necessary.

The pre-vocational "workshop" simulation which was observed at Program III's Fair Lawn Site in Spring, 1980, might be emulated in the Multiply Handicapped Program. The simulated workshop carried out for several hours a week, "employed" everyone in some capacity or another. Adaptation of this idea to the Multiply Handicapped Program makes eminent good sense, for it emphasizes the value of work for all students, and provides an opportunity to evaluate the training potential of each. Should this suggestion be adopted, appropriate work-related materials would have to be provided.

VI. INSTRUCTIONAL AND THERAPEUTIC EQUIPMENT

The Multiply Handicapped Program obviously is well equipped appropriate instructional and adapted therapeutic equipment. Each classroom was supplied with wedges, rolls, and other adaptive equipment designed to improve postural adjustment. In addition, a very complete range of slant boards, standing tables, wheel chairs, and other equipment was in evident use throughout the school.

The Speech Therapy staff seems to be very appropriate and ingenious in devising communication boards for the students who require training in non-verbal communication. The Program presently owns a 16-unit Zygo communication board, and it is understood that a 100-unit board will be received soon. The difficulty in using these, or other, electronic communication devices lies in the interface between user and board. Many of thechildren in the program are unable to use conventional painting devices, or even common switching mechanisms. Yet, it is clear that electronically based devices represent the best hope for communicative independence for these non-vocal youngsters. All of this is as a preface to the recommendation that the Program move aggressively to acquire a range of alternate communication devices, and a full range of interface switches.

The Prepke-Romisch Company, based in Ohio, manufactures and supplies a comprehensive range of switches. A brochure of their product line will be supplied to the program.

It should be noted that the Speech Therapists praised the volunteer efforts of a staff member who has spent his own leisure time, adapting equipment by making appropriate interface switches. The Board should be aware that this level of service is being rendered not only by this young man, but by many other staff members who are devoted to the habilitation of the severely handicapped population served by the Multiply Handicapped Program.

VII. INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES

The teaching staff seemed to be doing an exemplary job in utilizing available resources in the school and the community for instructional purposes. The evaluators learned of field trips taken, and observed the many ways in which the children were being made aware of what was going on in the larger community.

VIII. RELATED SERVICES

As is appropriate for a program of this sort, a full range of educationally related services is available to students enrolled in the Multiply Handicapped Program. These include transportation, physical, occupational and speech therapies, nursing services and counseling services. These services requirements are clearly specified in IEPs.

The philosophy which appears to underlie the delivery of related services stems from a transdisciplinary model, which presumes that particular staff members will train others to carry through on the goals and objectives of each therapy. In evaluating the extent to which this model guides actual operation, one would look for evidence of concern for proper postural adjustment in the classroom, use of communication

boards in the classroom, use of vocabulary in speech therapy that was learned in the classroom, and so forth. In fact, observation reveals abundant evidence to support the assertion that there is a highly effective transdisciplinary program in operation.

Teachers and teacher aides were highly aware of and attentive to the positioning of children, frequently moving children from side lying to a wedged-support prone position, or from a chair to a standing table. Appropriate adaptive equipment (rolls, wedges, and other supports as well as adapted chairs) was in constant use. Similarly, one saw evidence of classroom instruction carried over to therapy situations. In all, the program provides an excellent example of a transdisciplinary model in operation.

It would appear that determination of need for related services is based on clinical judgment. Thus, for any given child, decisions regarding eligibility for a particular therapy, the frequency and duration of service, and the goals of the related therapy rest with the therapists. Review of randomly selected student records suggest that it is rare for the child's physician to stipulate the need for, or the goals of the related therapies. One assumes that this is because the program is well known in the community, and physicians rely on the expertise of the therapists to suggest treatment programs which they then approve.

An accepted ratio of clinical staff to clients for a severely multiply handicapped population is 1 staff member for every 3 clients. When one groups teachers and therapists, the ratio of 1:3 is met in the Multiply Handicapped Program. It is difficult, if not impossible, to evaluate the efficiency of providing the level of related services presently provided by the Program. In the first place, the law clearly mandates that related services are to be provided. Secondly, no data exist which permit comparison of the progress made by students who do and who do not receive intensive related services. At best, we accept as an article of faith that students' educational programs are facilitated by the ancillary therapies which they receive.

Despite the absence of a data base, certain judgments can be made. First, it appears that the therapy staffs are sufficient to meet the needs of the present population. Thus, no increase in the number of therapists on staff is suggested. Secondly, it seems important to keep squarely in mind the fact that this is a school program. Thus, it is suggested that the present table of organization be retained and that there be no thought of creating Chief Therapist positions for each discipline; instead, all staff members should report to the Director, who will continue to coordinate the educational programs for all students.

IX. MONITORING THE PROGRESS OF INSTRUCTION AND THERAPY

At present, anecdotal reports and check lists are used to report instructional and therapeutic progress. In general, the reports follow the goals and objectives set forth in each child's I.E.P.

As the Program's curriculum is written, it should serve as the base for reporting pupil progress. The reporting system, based on the new curriculum, should then be implemented.

X. ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

A. Grouping of Students

In the multiply handicapped center, it appears that students are primarily grouped by developmental levels and by program. The range of abilities of the students within each class are somewhat homogeneous and all receive a predetermined amount of therapy. For example, those students in both the morning and afternoon preschool program all are within the chronological ages of 3-5 years with varying degrees of physical handicaps. Levels of retardation also vary but do not appear to be extreme in any one specific class.

There are also some students, specifically the older ones, who are grouped according to program. For example, an improvised vocational "type" program has students working with a variety of calculators, typewriters, etc. Many students in this group appear to be potentially employable as well as capable of pursuing advanced education programs. Students are also grouped, according to the functional skills they need, such as developing a menu, shopping, and preparing the food.

While in most instances, the groupings appear to be quite appropriate it is not always clear how specific students are selected for different programs or skill areas. Although the teachers, administration, and Child Study Team work closely together in making placement recommendations, it is also not apparent if parents, consultants, or community representatives input into this process.

B. Staffing (teacher/pupil; aide/teacher; CST program; counselor/program; therapist/pupil)

The teacher/pupil ratio and aide/teacher ratio appear commensurate with the educational guidelines established by the State of New Jersey. Information provided by the Child Study Team (CST) appears appropriate in terms of generating diagnostic data and suggestions for program planning. The CST appears to have insufficient time to be engaged in providing direct counseling services to parents and students. With the recent addition of a bachelor's level social worker (employed through CETA funds) more direct hands-on experience with the students has materialized. This individual works daily with the staff and students and appears to be performing a very critical and needed counseling service.

An evaluation of therapist/pupil ratio is difficult without a data base. For example, most students are seen at a minimum two to three times a week for various types of occupational, physical and/or speech therapy. No baseline study appears to have been done to see if students decrease in attainment of skills as a result of decreased therapy time. Being orthopedically handicapped doesn't automatically mean that therapy is always needed. For this reason, it is suggested that further study be conducted in this area, so data can either support, or not support, the need for fewer, more, or the existing number of therapists per

student.

C. Staffing - Administrative/Program

Administratively, there is one program director who is responsible for the educational and therapy-related operation of the center. The director is also responsible for working closely with medical personnel who consult with the program on a regular basis.

The three major therapies being provided in the school program, specifically, Occupational, Physical, and Speech Therapy, work directly under the director. Representatives from O.T., P.T. and Speech have suggested a need for a therapy head or director to whom they can report medically related concerns. Although there certainly are some advantages in being able to report to an administrator in one's own discipline or related discipline, this suggestion was viewed as not being particularly advantageous to the overall administration of the school program. In fact, it may very well promote a dichotomy between staff members who do not view the center as an educational facility which utilizes medically related services.

In terms of administrative paper work (i.e. forms, etc.), it must be stated that the center appears to have a very comprehensive system for collecting and reporting critical student data (health information, communication correspondence) and daily information to the staff as well as students. The director has taken a leadership role in developing these forms and has done an excellent job.

D. Job Descriptions

The job descriptions found in the Handbook of Operation are clearly outlines. They included both the qualifications as well as a general description of job responsibilities. Additionally, the job descriptions included information concerning immediate supervisors and provided a concise statement concerning how personnel were to be evaluated.

A review of job descriptions and observation of staff indicate that personnel were performing the jobs for which they were hired and were aware of how they were to be evaluated. Staff evaluation is carefully undertaken by the program director who utilizes video tape as part of his teacher evaluation process. This enables him to carefully analyze the strengths and weaknesses of his staff. It is not clear who provides the expertise to evaluate the therapists in terms of their medically related skills or those skills peculiar to their own discipline.

One question that should be raised is why the overwhelming emphasis on NDT trained therapists. It was unclear why this specific approach predominated when other centers with similar populations are more eclectic in their methodology.

E. Staff Development

The staff development calendar listed specific areas in which teachers expressed in-service interest. The areas appear appropriate and are all developed around student needs.

While there is never enough time for in-service programs, it is suggested that the program director and some staff visit other programs currently operating in the county for an updated perspective of what other programs are teaching as well as what they are providing in terms of in-service education. Individuals from these other programs should also be invited to come and speak to the center's school staff. Many staff did not know, specifically, what resources may be available to their students aside from the "Day Training Programs" which was defined differently by numerous staff.

XI. DECISION-MAKING

A. Flow of Information

It appears apparent that all major school decisions are made by the program director after consultation with staff members, parents, and the Child Study Team. Concerns of teachers and therapists are usually brought directly to the program director, and appear to be expeditiously addressed.

B. Communication

There are several systems for communication which are employed throughout the program. First, communication is provided on a daily basis through verbal contacts between administrative staff, Child Study Team staff, teachers, aides, and therapists. Second, communication is provided through a form (Direct Line) which presents information concerning reports that have been received by the school, important meeting dates, anticipated visitors, newly arrived resources and materials, and other significant news.

The communication among staff is ongoing. Typically, information concerning the type of therapy a student is receiving in a specific program is presented to the classroom teacher either by verbal exchange or through a conference. It must be stated how gratifying it was to observe teachers implementing many of the suggestions of the therapists (i.e. positioning) and their close working relationship. In addition, the Child Study Team provides information to individual teachers and therapists when appropriate . Unfortunately, many staff members indicated that their time constraints did not always allow them opportunities to share all of their ideas with their colleagues, although they were generally aware of what each one was doing.

Communication is also fostered between the parents and the school staff through a form developed to report "Parent Contacts." The nurses are also responsible for calling the students home when he/she is absent (after 3 days). In many cases the nurse(s) act as a direct line between home/parent information and the school.

XII. OUTREACH

Community Services

There appears to be limited community services available for the type of multiply handicapped student currently enrolled in the center (i.e. there has been very little progress made in developing group homes for severely physically handicapped individuals). It should be stated that there are many more services available for mentally retarded populations who are not severely orthopedically handicapped. Few procedures have been developed for working with groups such as the Disabled-In-Action. The outreach area needs to be addressed and existing resources (summer camps, work-study possibilities) need to be assessed to see if they are changing and are appropriate for this population.

Community Education

It appears that much community education occurs when the students are taken out on field trips or interact in the community during consumer or leisure education activities. While the community does have some general awareness of the multiply handicapped center as evidenced by the number of material and financial donations, volunteers, and parent efforts, it is not clear how well they know the goals of the program. This will need to be further studied as community awareness may very well lead to more community options for the students.

Parent Education

As in most systems involving severely handicapped or multiply handicapped students, it is not always easy to involve parents. Attempts to interest them have focused around selecting appropriate PTA topics.

Parent education counseling sessions where parents are able to sit and talk with a counselor as part of a "rap session" do not appear to be readily available nor is there data to support this need. The social worker on the Child Study Team while feeling this is important has insufficient time to work directly with parents in an ongoing counseling program.

The evaluators met with representatives of the parent group and found an increasing interest and need for counseling in the areas of vocational education, leisure education, and sex education. Parents, unfortunately, are absent from a committee that began last summer developing curriculum objectives in many of these critical areas.

SUMMARY EVALUATIVE STATEMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Commendations

I. The operation of the Program is consistent with its stated philosophy, goals, and objectives. The Program provides high quality service to its students.

   a. The staff is to be complimented for successfully operating in a transdisciplinary model. This provides optimum carry-through on educational and therapeutic goals.

II. Instructional practices seem to reflect an appropriate balance between group and individual procedures. Classes appear to be grouped according to the developmental level and instructional needs of the students.

III. The Program is supplied with appropriate instructional materials and instructional and therapeutic equipment.

   a. Equipment and materials are well maintained, and well distributed through the classrooms.

   b. It is apparent that materials and equipment are used appropriately in classes and in therapy rooms.

IV. The Program appears to have a comprehensive system for collecting and reporting critical student data and daily information. Mr. Butchko, who has developed this system, is to be commended.

Recommendations

I. Curriculum committees are presently working to develop a comprehensive continuous progress curriculum for the Program. They are urged to complete what promisesto be excellent curricula.

   a. The draft documents appear to be appropriately comprehensive to meet the needs of the student population. However, care should be taken to see that the curriculum emphasizes sufficiently "life skills" for the most "dependent" students.

   b. As the committees work on certain areas such as those related to self-help skills, social/recreational skills, and sexual awareness and skills, parents should be invited to participate as should an advisory group of disabled adults.

   c. A system for monitoring pupil progress which is based on the curriculum should be developed. This will ensure compatability of curriculum and pupil reporting systems.

   d. District administrators should coordinate curriculum development efforts across District programs so as to minimize redundancy of staff effort. For instance, the delineation of scope and sequence of reading objectives or math objectives should be made available to each program's curriculum committee, once it is available.

Recommendations Continued

I.

e. Attention should be given to the need to incorporate pre-vocational and vocational training into the curriculum. Consideration should be given to incorporating a pre-vocational component similar to that in operation at the Fair Lawn site of Program III.

II. The ratio of presently employed staff (teachers and therapists) to students is about 1:3. This meets the criterion set for service delivery to similar populations (eg. the Willowbrook Consent Decree).

a. Increases in staff should only be proportional to marked increases in enrollment. Additional staff are not needed to meet the educational or therapy needs of the present enrollment.

b. The program should attempt to determine whether there presently is an optimal balance between teachers and therapists.

c. The Program should continue to follow its present education model in which all staff members report to the Director, who is an educational administrator. The program should not adopt a medical model, which would establish a "Chief of Service" for each therapy discipline, although consideration should be given to development of a system for evaluating therapists specifically with regard to their skills in their own discipline.

d. The only increase in related services which seems warranted is in the area of counseling services. Parents and students should receive more direct counseling with regard to vocational opportunities, leisure-time activities, sex education, and adult living possibilities.

e. The Program should clarify why there is such an overwhelming emphasis on neurodevelopmentally trained therapists when other centers with similar populations are more eclectic in their methodology.

f. The Program should increase the number of alternative communication devices, and should provide a full range of interface switches for electronic devices.

III. While student grouping seems to work well, the Program should clarify and state the basis on which specific students are selected for different groups, programs, or skill areas.

a. The program should ensure that parents, consultants and/or community representatives, as well as students (as appropriate) have input into the placement recommendation process. An Advisory Board might be considered as a device to lead to gainful employment or other employment.

IV. There appears to be limited community support for services for multiply handicapped students and adults.

a. The Board should be aware of this situation and should serve as advocates in bringing to the attention of appropriate county and state agencies the need for recreation and transportation for the handicapped.

b. The Board should advocate employment opportunities and community residence opportunities for physically handicapped youth and adults.

c. The program should work with groups such as the Disabled in Action.

V. The number of field-based staff development experiences should be increased.

ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSE TO EVALUATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Administrative Response to Third Party Evaluation
Multiply Handicapped Program

Recommendations	Action Already Completed	Action In Process	Action Not To Be Completed
(1) Ensure that parents, consultants and/or community representatives have input into the placement recommendation process.	x		
(2) Clarify how specific students are selected for different groups, programs, or skill areas.....	x		
(3) The Program should not adopt a medical model which would establish a "Chief of Service" for each therapy discipline. The Program should continue to follow its present education model in which all staff report to the Director.....	x		
(4) Determine who might provide expertise to evaluate the therapists specifically in terms of their skills in their own discipline		x	
(5) Clarify why there is an overwhelming emphasis on NDT trained therapists when other centers with similar populations are more eclectic in their methodology....	x		
(6) Additional staff are not needed to meet the educational or therapy needs of the present enrollment. Increase in staff should only be proportional to marked increases in enrollment.....	x		
(7) Conduct a study to determine if the present balance of teachers and therapists is optimal		x	
(8) Increase the number of alternative communication devices and a full range of interface switches.....		x	
(9) Increase the direct counseling services to parents (re vocational, leisure education and sex education).....	x		

Administrative Response to Third Party Evaluation

	Already Completed	In Process	Not To Be Completed
(10) Increase the direct counseling services to students.....	x		
(11) Increase participation of parents and disabled adults in curriculum development.....		x	
(12) Increase the curriculum and pupil monitoring system compatability.....		x	
(13) Decrease the redundancy in curriculum development efforts. Increase curriculum sharing efforts District-wide.....		x	
(14) Increase the number of prevocational and vocational training objectives and explore viability of establishing a "workshop" model.		x	
(15) Increase the number of life skills objectives in the curriculum for the most "dependent" students.....		x	
(16) Increase the publicizing of the need to increase number of community services opportunities available for multiply handicapped students and adults.			
(a) employment opportunities			
(b) recreational opportunities			
(c) public relations			
(d) work with groups such as the Disabled in Action.....		x	
(17) Increase the number of field-based staff development experiences			
(a) visitations			
(b) invitations.....		x	

15A

21

22

APPENDIX I

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

(201) 265-6300

BOARD OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL SERVICES SCHOOL DISTRICT OF BERGEN COUNTY
327 EAST RIDGEWOOD AVE.
PARAMUS, N. J. 07652

PHILOSOPHY OF THE MULTIPLY HANDICAPPED PROGRAM

It is implicit in the philosophy of the Multiply Handicapped Program that all children, regardless of the limitations imposed upon them by birth, environment or factors of heredity, shall be given a full and equal opportunity to develop their unique and individual capacities. Included in the educational and therapeutic objectives are short and long-term goals which begin with the satisfaction of learner needs at the pre-school level and culminate in the mature satisfactions of self-sufficiency in adulthood. This in large measure depends upon provision of experiences which enable the individual to develop a concept of self which is secure, adequate, respected, and of value to him or herself and others; not in terms of what others are, but of what that individual is and can expect to accomplish and contribute in society.

NARRATIVE FOR THE MULTIPLY HANDICAPPED PROGRAM

This program is established and operated in accordance with all rules and regulations established by the New Jersey State Department of Education.

Program

A. Aims and Objectives

1. Classified multiply handicapped pupils are assigned to classroom groups in accordance with how they can best achieve success in learning.

2. The instructional program is designed to correct or compensate for the individual disability (multiple in nature.) Consideration is also given to children who not only have physical and educational handicaps but in addition may have a linguistic handicap where English is not the primary language.

3. Ancillary services are made available to all children in keeping with their specific educational needs.

4. Specialized facilities and materials are obtained and made available in keeping with the needs of the population.

5. A continuum of services is made available without disruption to the students' sequential educational plan.

6. Programs include, whenever possible, the education of the handicapped child with the non-handicapped in educational and social activities focusing on integration, normalization, and equalization.

Organization and Personnel

The program is under the direct authority of the Superintendent of Schools. A program Director has responsibility for the overall program for multiply handicapped children. A basic child study team including any other specific professional personnel when needed and as required by the New Jersey State Board of Education, Rules and Regulations is available. Certified teachers of the handicapped are employed as well as teacher aides, occupational therapists, physical therapists, speech correctionists, art teacher, physical education teacher, and any other personnel necessary to the program.

Program Policy and Procedure

(i.e., identification intake procedures, etc.)

Intake Procedures:

All pupils, regardless of age or handicap, are to have a complete evaluation before placement in the Bergen County Board of Education for Special Services facilities. These records must include:

1. Psychological and/or Psychiatric (if indicated) Evaluation: This evaluation is to have been completed within one year before placement. The evaluation should be completed by a fully certified Psychologist/Psychiatrist. The emotional status of the student, as well as a measure of his/her intellectual capacity should be included.

2. Medical Examination: A prerequisite for placement by the Board of Education of Special Services is a complete medical report. Included if the need is indicated:

   a. Opthalmologic/Optometric Exam
   b. Audiometric Exam
   c. Neurological evaluation (EEG)
   d. Orthopedic
   e. Record of Immunizations

3. Social History should include:
   a. Pre-natal history
   b. Developmental history with milestones noted
   c. History of prior illnesses/accidents/operations
   d. Place in family constellation
   e. Environmental information (family, community)

4. Educational Evaluation: A certified Learning Disabilities Teacher-Consultant's complete diagnosis and program is to be submitted with other records. Academic strengths and weaknesses of the student should be noted with recommendations as to the implementation of the program.

Prior achievements are to be included when available as well as present levels of achievement.

The local district's Child Study Team and the Board of Special Services School District will work cooperatively on the staffing and placement of the pupil to insure the best possible program available. Placement of the student is contingent upon the judgment and approval of the Bergen County Special Services School District.

Parents of a multiply handicapped child are kept informed of the process and progress of the anticipated placement in the Special Services School District.

5. Education Plan: In accordance with state law, an Educational Plan must be submitted by the School District prior to admission.

Nature and Scope of Program

The purpose of The Multiply Handicapped Program of Bergen County Board of Special Services is to develop an in-depth educational program for approximately 135 multiply handicapped children. This plan includes the establishment of (17) classrooms which are staffed by certified teachers of the handicapped as well as teacher aides. The classroom groupings, to a large extent, are determined by the child's diagnostic evaluations and educational plan. Because of the severity of the child's involvement, a grouping compatibility will be based on:

1. Social interaction experience
2. Chronological age
3. Learning level paced to individual ability
4. Flexibility of program experience in a grouping that is functional and has practical application.
5. Activities involving daily living in a classroom environment in order that each individual can learn to function with the greatest amount of independence.
6. Flexible academic learning experiences that provide the greatest opportunity for meaningful academic skill development.
7. On-going evaluation procedure to determine necessary program modification and movement in a sequential plan.

There is a proposed plan to help children who can be fully integrated into a regular school program; resource rooms will be established in a regular public school setting to lend total supportive services to insure continual success in the educational program. The program will be comprehensive involving a K to 12 continuum with all necessary ancillary services. It is anticipated that the program will be operated on an eleven month basis, thus eliminating to a large extent the regression in a child's progress which does tend to take place in many ten month school programs. The summer program would differ in that it could include recreational and camping experiences.

The facilities should be located wherever possible in existing public school settings and plans are underway which include a building program. Wherever possible, a one-story structure will be considered due to the fact that many students will be non-ambulatory. A constant awareness of architectural barriers will be considered and removed whenever possible.

The purpose of the overall program is to provide a quality, in-depth program incorporating the very best in educational technology and methodology, with integration back to the "mainstream" being of prime importance.

Proposed Curriculum

The objectives and goals of the curriculum are geared to the individual's needs, limitations, and potential ability. These include:

1. The development of a positive self concept leading to independence in post-school adjustment.

2. The fostering of appropriate communication skills on cognitive and affective levels.

3. The physical growth of each student to reach maximum development.

4. The direction and counseling of each student and parents towards making appropriate decisions in post-school situations.

The multiply handicapped program focuses on the special needs and abilities of each student in both academic and socio-psychological areas. The educational techniques use multi-sensory approaches to facilitate learning. Since multiply handicapped children differ in ability/disability, it is necessary that educational materials and physical and occupational therapy equipment be specifically tailored to the individual.